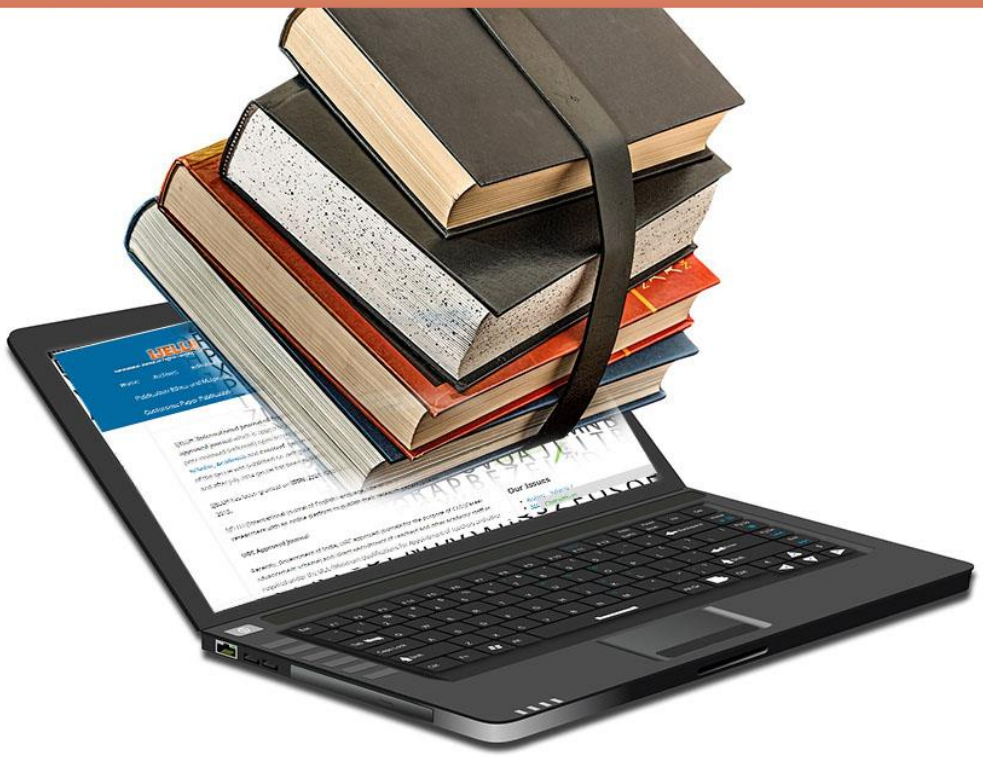
INTERNATIONAL STANDARD SERIAL NUMBER
ISSN-2321-7065

IJELLH

International Journal of English Language, Literature in Humanities

Indexed,Peer Reviewed (Refereed), UGC Approved Journal



Volume 7, Issue 3, March 2019

www.ijellh.com

M. B. Anitha

Ph.D Research Scholar, English Department,

Bharathiar University,

Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India

sunsarani.a@gmail.com

Dr. A. Yuvaraj

Assistant Professor, Department of English,

Government Thirumagal Mills College,

Gudiyattam, Tamilnadu, India

yuvarajj76@gmail.com

Current Trends in Testing and Evaluation – A review

Abstract

Testing has a major role in proving the success of any scheme that is introduced in the field of education. This article has attempted to review research articles done under the topic testing, assessment and evaluation. In addition, the article discussed a few books dealing with basic concepts dealt with testing.

Keywords: CCE, NCLB, WIDA consortium, language assessment.

1. Introduction

The objective of the article is to analyse some of the core issues in the field of language teaching. It further discusses the significance of some of the issues in CCE that have been introduced and followed in schools in tamilnadu.

2. Review

Liying Cheng, Stephen Andrews and Ying Yu(2010) analyse the impact and the interpretations of students and parents about a newly introduced scheme SBA, School Based Assessment in Hong Kong certificate. The authors state that students those who are less competent are stronger about SBA when compared with high competent English medium students. In addition, they proved that parent's contribution in ward's education is the major reason for the success of SBA implementation.

Michael B. Bunch (2011) researched on tests conducted by the NCLB (No child Left Behind) based on enhanced Grant Program and with tests conducted by some commercial and local to assess the English Language Learners (ELL). He compares state-consortia's framed tests with tests conducted by teachers in classroom to prove that ELL assessment should go for a change in assessment. Author found out that the enhanced Grant Program is based on summative assessment but the other commercial tests which are currently available for students follow formative assessment. He added that, in future, formative assessment will be a successful form of assessment and NCLB would go for reauthorization due to the progress in testing field.

Alison Bailey, Becky, H. Huang, (2011)with an illustrative review attempted to compare the standards of ELL in California with WIDA consortium,World-class Instructional Design and Assessment, a standard assessment and curricula of ELL. They focused on the domains of language to evaluate the language development and the proficiency standards. According to authors, ELL students proficiency compared to WIDAELP students, CAELD, California English Development is more academic than being proficient.

Common principle between them is that both have high level of complexities and to prove the level of development/proficiency, a core of standard approach with detailed learning progressions should be implemented.

Lorena Llosa(2011) analyses the issues and challenges faced by students and teachers in following the Standard Based Assessment in schools to assess language proficiency without any bias. The researcher has used factor analysis of multi-trait-multi method data to assess the decision making process involved in assessing student's paper. It is found that decision making in evaluating students is different as it varies with individual due to the evaluation factors. In fact, assessment should be done with the view of the student's academic performance, if not it will results in unreliable attitude in assessment and the teachers' lack of professionalism. Decision making needs some focus towards academics It is argued that if the assessment is conducted in formative, the gap between the real skill and talents and the secured score, will be filled in. According to researcher, the assessment pattern should be revised and bounded with formative and summative assessment based on the psychometric reliability and validity as a context. Researcher concluded by emphasizing the importance of a change in assessment which can be considered in all proficiency and standard based assessments like SBCA, WIDA.

This article talks on defining Assessment Literacy Course (LAC) and based on it, Heejeong Jeong(2013) discusses the difference between language testers(LT) professional trainers and non-language testers(non LT) and the discipline that the trainers have selected. According to the author, non language testers have less confidence when compared with language testers in terms of testing, assessment, test theory, rubric development and other aspects of assessment tools. The researcher found out from his surveys and interactions that LTs stands a high compared to non LTs theoretically, on the other hand, Students take up assessments effectively which is conducted by non LTs. Finally, the analysis ends with a

proof that majority of instructors who conduct assessments successfully are non LT instructors.

This article highlights on the self awareness of teachers on the interpretation of assessment and their knowledge development in language assessment. Angela Scarino(2013) tries to discuss reconsidering the assessment interpretation by professional development. This paper related to professional learning of teachers of languages in K-12 years in Australia. Researcher selected two contexts to consider and the one is theoretical paradigms and the other is the concept of knowledge base expansion which contains ideas from different paradigms.

The author raises the issue that the assessment and the assessor should be reconsidered as they did not give free hand for teachers to assess students. The author suggested combining both the knowledge base, and the literary of language assessment to transform teacher's understanding, improvement and practice of assessment in the classroom. The success is how the teacher integrates, understands and practices the different aspects of knowledge base in diverse environment, students and communities from the training. Author proved it by interviewing teachers under all heading and concluded that knowledge base is very essential for any teacher to understand and to take a role of assessor. Teacher assessor should inter relate the understandings of environment and contexts to develop the reason of teaching, learning and assessment. Teacher should create self awareness to examine themselves for a better interpretation and to the development of language assessment literacy.

Ajit Monte and Jayanta Mete(2013) attempts to explore the historical aspects, the requirements, the significance and the involvement and contribution of a teacher in the newly introduced Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation in CBSE syllabus in Indian school education system. This evaluation system is implemented to all levels of schools and it is a reform in evaluation in the context of Indian education. The method handled is evidence

based to prove the performance of majority of students from various schools. The researchers describe the evaluation design and schedule and explained the aspects of Continuous and comprehensive Evaluation. The article ends with the belief that if this evaluation is followed for years together, Indian education will take a new dimension to create new opportunities for the learners.

Vinita chopra and Ranjana Bhatia visited 20 CBSE government schools and private schools to observe the newly implemented scheme, Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation in English classrooms at secondary level. Their study zoomed in to formative assessment practices of all the four skills in English and having teacher's manual as a guide, they evaluated various techniques used by teachers. According to the researchers, reading is neglected by students and hence, they have minimal knowledge about the skill. The authors emphasize on planning the syllabus with all the subject teachers' coordination. They concluded that the success of this scheme is dealt not only with students but also with other supporting factors like school management, teachers, parents and society.

Antony Green's book on testing clearly states all the traditional strategies of assessment. It is quite a suitable one for the beginners in the field of assessment. It speaks about the practices involved in assessment and explains the process involved in assessment and a detailed description. It views on the current trends followed in the field of testing and assessment along with the do's and don'ts to be observed while practicing assessment methods. The author explains the progress of assessment as PRICE, Principles of Planning, Reliability, Improvement, Cooperation and Evidence. The objective of this book is to guide new comers with basics of assessment, the variations, audience-centered tasks, issues faced during assessment process and the future of language assessment.

Glenn Fulcher (2003) presents a new dimension in assessing and assessing speaking in specific contexts. This book explores the importance and a clear explanation of assessment

and methods especially to assess one of the skill, speaking. Qualitative and quantitative are the main headings for the analysis of various approaches. Book concludes that methods that have been selected to test the Second Language Speaking should be tester-oriented. It should be fair enough according to the test takers. Author gives an end note that though testing speaking is shown as a difficult one, this book would be a guiding star that concerns about testing speaking.

Ciril J. Weir (1996) exemplifies that testing and validation is an ongoing process in assessment. The major view of the book is to establish scores in exams conducted by teachers. The approach adopted is evidence-based which is to argue with evidence and prove the trial. This book views on designing the test, its abilities to measure and gives an example of a task and carrying out surveys. It highlighted the reliability in scores and further examines the scores to criticize and relate it to the other tests takes place in the real world. Finally, it assesses on the back wash method and the impact on the team involved in the field of education. It talks on the syllabus, characteristics, test methodology, validation methodology, procedures in research and questionnaires. The author answers any questions by the teachers who take up testing and validation. This is more reliable for the beginners to do their empirical research.

3. Conclusion

Language testing is undoubtedly a significant aspect in the process of teaching and learning. Some of the novel methods of assessing language skills have been introduced by the government to positively impact the learning outcomes. These methods have been implemented with a noble objective that all types of learners are included in the evaluation process and moreover, it would provide a less-threatening atmosphere for the slow learners, too. But the practical issues in implementing these new methods of testing have to be

analysed by the researchers. The article by discussing some of the core issues in testing English at the school level hopes to draw the attention of all the stakeholders involved in the field of education.

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